

What is claimed is:

1. A rechargeable battery adapted to be repeatably and releasably attached to an orthopedic drive assembly, the orthopedic drive assembly having elongate drive and handle portions, a battery receiving portion having a pair of tracks defining flanges, a pair of battery terminals, and a blocking member movable between latched and release positions;

said battery comprising:

- an autoclavable battery housing having top and bottom portions, at least one cell within the battery housing and a pair of battery contacts adjacent the top portion of the housing and situated to engage the battery terminals of the orthopedic drive assembly.

- releasable attachment means for releasably attaching the battery to the battery receiving portion in a direction other than the direction of elongation of the handle portion.

said releasable attachment means comprising:

- a) the battery having a pair of grooves adapted to receive the flanges of the tracks, and
- b) a slot for receiving the blocking member when the blocking member is in the latched position.

2. A rechargeable battery according to claim 1 wherein each of the battery terminals comprise a substantially flat plate member having opposite side surfaces, and

- each of said battery contacts comprise a pair of flexible, resilient arcuate members which are adapted to engage opposite side surfaces of a battery terminal.

3. A rechargeable battery according to claim 1 wherein said battery contacts each include a first end fixedly attached to said top portion of said battery housing and a second end adapted to abut a support shoulder of the top portion of the battery housing.

4. A rechargeable battery according to claim 1 wherein said battery housing comprises opposite, substantially flat front and rear walls constructed from a material suitable for protecting the cell(s) during an autoclave procedure.

said battery comprises eight substantially cylindrical cells having longitudinal axes, said eight cylindrical cells being arranged in:

- a) a front row of three cells substantially adjacent said front wall within the battery housing,
- b) a rear row of three cells substantially adjacent said rear wall within the battery housing, and
- c) a middle row of two cells between said front and rear rows wherein all eight cells are within the battery housing.

5. A rechargeable battery according to claim 1 wherein the slot is sized and shaped to engage the blocking member to lock the battery to the battery receiving portion when the blocking member is in the latched position.

6. A rechargeable battery according to claim 1 wherein the battery further includes means for automatically moving the blocking member from the latched toward the release position as the battery is mounted to the battery receiving portion.

7. A rechargeable battery according to claim 6 wherein the means for automatically moving the blocking member comprises a ramped surface on the top portion of the battery housing.

8. A rechargeable battery adapted to be repeatably and releasably attached to an orthopedic drive assembly, the orthopedic drive assembly having elongate drive and handle portions, a battery receiving portion having a pair of tracks defining flanges, a pair of battery terminals, and a blocking member movable between latched and release positions;

said battery comprising a battery housing having top and bottom portions, at least one cell within the battery

housing, and a pair of battery contacts adjacent the top portion of the housing and situated to engage the battery terminals of the orthopedic drive assembly when the battery is fully received by the orthopedic drive assembly.

releasable attachment means for releasably attaching the battery to the battery receiving portion, said releasable attachment means comprising:

- a) the battery having a pair of grooves adapted to receive the flanges of the tracks, and
- b) a slot for receiving the blocking member when the blocking member is in the latched position, wherein the slot is sized and shaped to engage the blocking member to lock the battery to the battery receiving portion when the blocking member is in the latched position.

9. A rechargeable battery according to claim 8 wherein the battery further includes means for automatically moving the blocking member from the latched toward the release position as the battery is mounted to the battery receiving portion.

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10. A rechargeable battery according to claim 9 wherein the means for automatically moving the blocking member comprises a ramped surface on the top portion of the battery housing.

5 11. A rechargeable battery according to claim 8 wherein each of the battery terminals comprise a substantially flat plate member having opposite side surfaces, and

10 each of said battery contacts comprise a pair of flexible, resilient arcuate members which are adapted to engage opposite side surfaces of a battery terminal.

12. A rechargeable battery according to claim 8 wherein said battery contacts each include a first end fixedly attached
15 to said top portion of said battery housing and a second end adapted to abut a support shoulder of the top portion of the battery housing.

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